

A

REVIEW

OF THE

STATE

OF THE

ENGLISH NATION.

Tuesday, April 16. 1706.

I Ended the last Paper, with some Notes upon the Word in Her Majesty's Speech, at the opening the last Session of Parliament, *I will inviolably maintain the TOLERATION*; I observ'd how effectually it has crush'd the Design, and dash'd the hopes of that Party, who pretended to Oppress the Dissenters, and yet preserve the Queen's Promise.

For this End, they began to Preach up strange and new Doctrines, and maintain *These*, that no body to this Hour, can understand but themselves.

1. That the Dissenters Schools might be Suppress'd, and yet the Toleration be maintain'd; as if letting them go undisturb'd to the Meeting-Houses were sufficient, and all that was to be understood by Toleration, was for themselves, not for their Posterity;

as if they had a full Toleration, in having a liberty to Worship God their own way, but should not be Tolerated to Teach their Children, the same thing as if the Toleration was Maintain'd; if I were permitted to go to a Dissenting Meeting, but not for my Son to go to a Dissenting School; or as if my Son has not as much Right to the Queen's Promise as I, that our Children had not as good a Claim for Liberty of Instruction as their Fathers.

2. That their Academies might be Suppress'd too, without any Impeachment of the Toleration; that the liberty of Dissenters was left free, while the Ministers might Preach undisturb'd, but no more must be bred up to Preach, when these were remov'd by Death; that we might hear and welcome, but they would prevent any bodies Preach.

Preaching, by destroying the Seminaries of Instruction.

3. That the Dissenters should be entirely Tolerated, only be depriv'd of any sort of Trust or Employment in the State, for they should have full Liberty of their Religion, only lose their Privilege of Voting for Members of Parliament; and the like.

These were such Absurdities, that I really often wonder'd these People could think, the Queen could see these things done, and yet imagine Her Majesty's Sacred Promise kept with us, and the offering at them, was to my Apprehension, one of the grossest Affronts, they could possibly have put upon the QUEEN. —

As if depriving People of their Privileges, and Suffrages in Elections for their Religion, depriving them of and Incapacitating them for Publick Employments in the State, for their Religion, was not Persecution.

As if depriving their Youth of Education, their Ministry of a Succession, and themselves of Breeding up their Children in their own way, was consistent with Toleration.

These were the Absurdities, together with the Prospect of more in the *Embryo*, of the most fruitful Invention of the Party, which mov'd the Queen, to put a full stop to all their expectations, in the Word **IN VIOLABLY**.

I need not take upon me to Explain this Word, the Gentlemen understand it, and their future Despair tells us, that Her Majesty in plain Terms lets them know, 'tis in vain to Attempt any more Occasional Bills; in vain to contrive a Bill, to Suppress the Dissenters Schools and Academies, which Bill I can inform the World, was ready drawn, Coin'd in the same Mint, and only waited to have been brought in, when ever the Occasional Bill had pass'd — But this Unhappy Word *Inviolably*, has Dismounted them all; and they are now satisfi'd 'tis in Vain to Attempt it.

I have touch'd this Matter as lightly as I can, as a thing which seems now asleep; and but for the Connexion of Story, neces-

sary to make these Accounts perfect, I had not look'd back so far.

I am now come to the End of the Tacking Parliament; Her Majesty dismiss'd them with a gentle Reminding them of the Danger these things had brought us into, and how near the unreasonable Heats and Animosities they had fall'n into, and the dangerous Experiments they had made, had brought us all to Ruine and Confusion, and so sent them home.

I can not but observe here, how a certain Noble Person, seems to call in Question, the Queen's taking Notice of this as an Irregularity, and that the Queen ought not to appear to know any thing done in Parliament, but in a Parliamentary manner.

How far Her Majesty is or is not Limited by Parliamentary Privilege, from taking Notice of any thing done in Parliament, is not for me to determine; but to me it seems plain, that if the Queen has not as much right to observe in Parliament, what she thinks well or ill done, and tell them her Royal Opinion of their Proceedings from the Throne, Her Majesty has then less Liberty left her, than several of her Ancestors practis'd before the Revolution; and not to go back to King *Charles I.* and King *James I.* the Reign of King of *Charles I.* is full of Instances of it — But above all, that it should seem the Queen then has less Liberty, than these Gentlemen themselves take, who make Unparliamentary Reflections upon Her Majesty's Transactions in Parliament, and then Print them without Authority of Parliament, as Appeals to the People against their Sovereign.

But to return to the preceding Session, which being now concluded, from the dismissing that Parliament, and sometimes before to the beginning of the next, which was the 23^d. of *October*; it is impossible to describe the Flame of this Unhappy Nation, the Scandal of Tacking, made abundance of Gentlemen Odious to the People; the preposterous Project painted them in Colours, that the Common People were justly surpriz'd at, and generally speaking, the People of *England*, declar'd themselves dissatisfi'd and displeas'd.

On the other hand, the Party defended themselves as well as they could, some Gentlemen excus'd and Explain'd themselves, most of them endeavour'd to deny and conceal their being of the Number — but to avoid that, Printed Lists were dispers'd of their Names, and the Ballad of the 134 had, tho' but little Poetry, so much Fast in it, that in spite of Concealment, Gentlemen began to blush at the Matter, and be Asham'd.

Some of them however, not furnish'd with so much Modesty, boasted of their Folly, vallued themselves upon what they could not conceal, and insisted upon the Justice of it, though with more Face than Argument.

In this posture Elections began, and it would be endless to remind the Nation of the Blemish of that time; the Riots, the Fury, the Convulsions of Parties were such, that I believe no Battle, no Siege, no Skirmish, in all the War, has been carried on with more Personal Rage, Envy of Parties, and implacable Animosity.

'Tis true, here was no Blood shed, or not much; but Reputation had no Quarter given, Reproach shot more poisoned Arrows, than Bullets flew at the Battle of *Hochstetter*; *Investives*, *Scandal*, *Slander*, and all sorts of Malicious Attempts, storm'd the Counter-scarp of Towns, Countries and Parties; Mines and Countermine, of *Fraud*, *Lying*, *Perjury*, *Bribes*, and *Subornation*, were dug in every Country and blew up whole Bodies of Men together.

Nothing was sacred, but it was here Prophan'd; Promises, Oaths, Ties of Blood, and all sorts of Moral Obligation sunk in this Fray, and gave way to Violence, Slander, and Strength of Money.

The Pulpit, the Press, the Exchange, the Market, all were Debauch'd with the Contagion of Parties; Family divided against Family; Town against Town, Country against Country, and the whole Kingdom against it self. Enquiry after News ceas'd, and Foreign Affairs had none of our Regard; the French might Fight or run away, the Confederates succeed or not succeed; no body concern'd themselves about it: the

War was all at Home, the Feuds were too great here, to mind the trifling business of Italy or the *Maes*; in short, the whole Nation was as, we say, together by the Ears in Elections.

'Tis below my Readers Observation, how that Scandal of Scribbling, the News-Writer *Dyer*, in his Papers gave Account of Elections.

In such a place the Church had the better of it, and two honest Tackers were Chosen — Two brave Tackers are returned for such a Town — In another place, the Phanaticks got the better, and an honest Tacker was thrown out; and again, notwithstanding the boast of the Party, above 50 Tackers are already Chosen, and the like.

If the Gentlemen had not been strangely deluded all over England, they could not have been pleas'd with such Stuff as this, when they plainly saw, that in spite of the Policy and Artifice of their Conduct, or the Assurance and Warmth of their Advocates in all parts; the thing it self grew Odious, the Persons concern'd in it, in a great many places, blush'd and disowned it, others daily came off from the Party, saw their Folly, and generally speaking, the thing it self grew Scandalous and Offensive.

Nor was it long before the Party foresaw it, and in spite of all their Abortive Projects, some of which I shall lay open in the Progress of these Papers; we have lived to see the Attempt given over, and the Despair of the Party run them upon Raillery, and continual Abuses of the Government, the Queen, the Ministry, and all true lovers of Liberty and Moderation, be they never so Eminent for Loyalty to the Crown, or Zeal for the Church.

This is apparent in their Inveterate Speeches, Investive Sermons, Calumniating Books, such as *Memorials*, *Stephens* and *Browns* Pamphlets, and innumerable others.

And here I cannot but pity the Misfortune of the last two Authors, who, in their Attempts, have rashly and inconsiderately involved themselves into such *Labyrinths*, as no wise Man would have run into, because no honest principle can maintain them under.

The